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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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SEPT 5

SUBJ: CA ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN THE DELTA

1. ELECTION CAMPAIGN SO FAR IN FOUR POPUWKUS DELTA PROVINCES OF PHONG DINH, DINH TUONG, KIEN HOA, AND VINH LONG FINDS MODERATE INTEREST DEVELOPING IN PROVINCE AND DISTRICT CAPITALS, WHILE AWARENESS OF ELECTION AMONG VILLAGERS IN INCREASING BUT AT SLOWER PACE. PROVINCE OFFICIALS APPEAR TO HAVE ADMINISTRATIVE AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTIONS WELL IN HAND.

2. ONLY MAJOR VC ACTION SO FAR DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO ANTI-ELECTION CAMPAIGN (EXCEPT FOR INCENSIVE PROPAGANDA WAS AUGUST 26 MINING OF CIVILIAN BUS IN VINH LONG WHICH KILLED 15, WOUNDED 25, ALL CIVILIANS. PROVINCE OFFICIALS ATTRIBUTE MINING TO VC EFFORT CLOSE TAM BINH DISTRICT ROAD PRIOR SEPTEMBER 11.

3. CANDIDATES UTILIZING PROVINCIAL RADIO FACILITIES, DISTRIBUTING POSTERS AND LEAFLETS, AND ADDRESSING VOTERS AT MEETINGS USUALLY SCHEDULED FOR PROVINCE AND DISTRICT CAPITALS. CROWDS REPORTED TO RANGE FROM 100-500, OCCASIONALLY LARGER.

4. UNIFIED BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES REPORTEDLY VISITED DINH TUONG, VINH LONG AND PHONG DINH DURING TEN DAYS PRIOR CAMPAIGN KICKOFF AUGUST 26 TO URGE ELECTION BOYCOTT. PROVINCE OFFICIALS BELIEVE UBA BOYCOTT CALL WILL HAVE INSIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON TURNOUT, WHICH THEY PREDICT AT 60/70 PERCENT.
(FOUR PROVINCES HAVE AGGREGATE OF 523,000 VOTERS.)
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